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Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General hereby transmits to the General Assembly the report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) on the activities of the Institute for the period from January 2017 to May 2018 and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2018 and 2019.

The Board of Trustees of UNIDIR reviewed the report and approved the programme of work and financial plans at the seventieth session of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters, held in New York from 27 to 29 June 2018.

The Board welcomed the new Director and endorsed her strategic vision for UNIDIR. As in previous years, the Board was impressed by the range of projects and activities that UNIDIR had completed in 2017 as well as those under way. It noted with satisfaction the significant role accorded to UNIDIR in the recently released Agenda for Disarmament of the Secretary-General and the commitment of the Secretary-General in the Agenda to strengthening the strategic role of UNIDIR in all disarmament processes and deliberations.

The Board also considered the independent third-party assessment, which outlined a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for UNIDIR, and which will be the subject of a separate report of the Secretary-General. The Board supports the recommendations laid out in the assessment and reiterates its conviction of the importance that UNIDIR be given the necessary operating capacity and regular budgetary resources to carry out its mandate in a sustainable, impartial and inclusive manner.

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Report of the Director of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research on the activities of the Institute for the period from January 2017 to May 2018 and the proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2018 and 2019

Summary

The present report covers the activities and financial status of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). It was prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 39/148 H, in which the Assembly invited the Director of UNIDIR to report annually to it.

Established in 1980, UNIDIR is an autonomous institution within the United Nations that conducts independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. The role of UNIDIR is to support Member States, the United Nations and policy and research communities in identifying and promoting practical measures that contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world. It carries out that role though four key areas of activity: promoting knowledge, generating ideas, facilitating dialogue and providing advice.

In addition to the wide range of projects and activities described in the report for which UNIDIR receives dedicated funding, UNIDIR provides factual information, policy advice and support to Member States, officeholders and individual delegations participating in disarmament-related processes. In 2018, for example, UNIDIR supported the work of each of the five subsidiary bodies of the Conference on Disarmament, by providing briefings, background papers and materials, and through the participation of experts.

A future priority for UNIDIR will be to support the Agenda for Disarmament of the Secretary-General, the first comprehensive cross-system effort to mainstream and integrate disarmament across the work of the United Nations that will shape its research agenda, activities and resource mobilization efforts. The Agenda identifies UNIDIR as a source of knowledge and practical support for action in specific areas, including but not limited to nuclear risk reduction, space security, armed unmanned aerial vehicles and emerging technology issues. In addition, UNIDIR will seek to broaden the conversation around why disarmament matters in times of tension to prevent crises, how it supports and contributes to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and how it must be led by more diverse stakeholders, including through the participation of young people and the promotion of gender parity.

UNIDIR has a unique contribution to make to multilateral disarmament. The establishment of a stable and sustainable basis for it do so will be an issue for the attention of Member States in the coming months. In 2015, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to present to it at its seventy-third session a report on a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for UNIDIR, on the basis of an independent, third-party assessment. UNIDIR welcomes the opportunity to engage with Member States on the basis of the report to put in place the structures and processes for UNIDIR to deliver responsive and effective knowledge, ideas and advice on both current and future disarmament and security issues.

I. Introduction

A. Mandate and objectives

1. Since it was established by the General Assembly in 1980, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) has functioned as an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations with the purpose of undertaking independent research on disarmament and related problems, particularly international security issues. The distinct nature of UNIDIR within the United Nations system reflects the importance that Member States ascribe to objective and factual studies and analyses to facilitate negotiated progress on disarmament, promote informed participation by all States in disarmament efforts and stimulate new initiatives for negotiations.

2. Since its creation, notwithstanding the stagnation of multilateral disarmament institutions and its reliance on voluntary funding, UNIDIR has consistently produced quality analysis and ideas on a wide range of disarmament issues. In that time, it has built a significant institutional repository of knowledge for Member States, the arms control and non-proliferation research community and the wider United Nations system to draw on in pursuing dialogue and cooperation to prevent armed conflict and mitigate its impact on people and states. At a time of deteriorating international security — as measured by the greater number and longer duration of conflicts, the number of civilian casualties of violence and conflict and the high global military expenditures — and as the frameworks of and means for sustainable peace and security, including multilateral arms control arrangements, are being called into question, the need for impartial and fact-based knowledge and analyses has never appeared more urgent or more challenging. As the Secretary-General underscored in his Agenda for Disarmament, entitled "Securing Our Common Future",[1] today's reality demands that disarmament and non-proliferation be put at the centre of the work of the United Nations. The role of UNIDIR is to support Member States, the United Nations and the policy and research communities in identifying how that might be achieved and in ways that contribute to a more sustainable and peaceful world. UNIDIR carries out its role through four main areas of activity, described below.

3. **Knowledge**. UNIDIR tracks and produces information on a wide range of issues on the multilateral disarmament agenda, including in the Conference on Disarmament, General Assembly processes and bodies and the treaty bodies. Through its knowledge products, UNIDIR provides factual and substantive information on key issues and processes, including on emerging and often complex disarmament issues, and with a view to enabling all Member States to participate in multilateral discussions. They also provide a vehicle to bring cutting edge research to the attention of intergovernmental processes and actors. The ongoing series of "primers" produced by UNIDIR on the weaponization of increasingly autonomous technologies, initiated just as the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects established a process to explore this issue in 2014, is an example of this knowledge function in action.

4. **Ideas**. UNIDIR undertakes in-depth, original research on a more limited set of current and emerging disarmament issues through dedicated research projects and activities. The purpose of such enquiries is to identify new issues for consideration by the broader disarmament community and to encourage attention, cooperation and progress on them in multilateral forums. In some instances, the focus of the work is to generate new momentum for progress on processes that are in stalemate, by

[1] Available at https://front.un-arm.org/documents/SG+disarmament+agenda_1.pdf.

offering new perspectives or by reframing a long-standing problem. An example of such ideas is the current pioneering work carried out by UNIDIR on nuclear weapons verification through proposals for deferred verification and verifying the absence of nuclear weapons.

5. **Dialogue**. Generating knowledge and ideas is necessary but not sufficient for UNIDIR to implement its mandate successfully. A key component of the work of UNIDIR is to facilitate dialogue between and among disarmament stakeholders, and its autonomous status within the United Nations gives it a potentially unique convening capacity. Well-established forums for discussion, such as the annual Space Security Conference, offer an opportunity to bring together Governments, research bodies, civil society and private sector actors — which play an increasingly important role in outer space — to explore long-standing as well as emerging risks and opportunities for security and stability in outer space. Supporting dialogue will become an even more important part of its work: first, as new technologies bring new, non-State actors into arms control debates; second, as the diversity and capacity of research communities around the world offer new perspectives and expertise that can benefit multilateral negotiations in Geneva and New York; and third, as integration of arms control efforts with key United Nations processes, in particular the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is enhanced, the potential for dialogue between disarmament and development, as well as broader peace and security actors, will increase.

6. **Advice**. In support of practical disarmament action at the multilateral and national levels, UNIDIR also provides policy advice on specific arms control issues to a range of different entities upon request. Much of that work has to date been in the field of conventional arms control, where UNIDIR assists national Governments and regional organizations in assessing regulatory and/or capacity gaps or challenges and identifying options to address them. The work UNIDIR performs in supporting countries to establish national policy frameworks for the management of weapons and ammunition in Somalia and West Africa is helping countries in their efforts to build and sustain peace and make progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. UNIDIR is regularly engaged to consult for the Groups of Governmental Experts established by the General Assembly and to provide advice to Security Council Panels of Experts on issues related to arms embargoes.

7. The present report covers the activities and financial status of UNIDIR during the period from January 2017 to May 2018, revenue and expenses for 2017 and the first quarter of 2018 and the proposed programme of work and projections for 2019.

B. Recent developments in multilateral disarmament and implications for UNIDIR

8. Developments during the reporting period have helped to create a new sense of urgency and potential impetus for the reinvigoration of multilateral disarmament processes. This has had implications for UNIDIR both in terms of the scope of its research work and its advisory and dialogue functions. As noted above, on 24 May 2018, the Secretary-General set out a comprehensive road map for disarmament and non-proliferation that included practical measures and recommendations for the institutions and processes of the United Nations disarmament machinery, including UNIDIR. He called for UNIDIR to play a greater strategic role in disarmament processes and deliberations, pointing to its advisory services and the studies it had undertaken at the request of the General Assembly. UNIDIR was also tasked, together with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, to examine ways to better coordinate and

integrate work and expertise among the various disarmament entities of the Organization.

9. UNIDIR was also identified in the Agenda for Disarmament as a source of knowledge and practical support for action in specific disarmament areas, including with regard to nuclear weapon risk reduction measures; transparency and confidence-building measures in outer space activities and the prevention of an arms race in outer space; the examination of hypersonic missile technologies; the development of standards for the transfer, holding and use of armed unmanned aerial vehicles; better integration of the impact of arms into United Nations assessments, risk analyses and conflict-prevention activities; facilitating the exchange of information and experiences between States on the reviews of new weapons; and studies and dialogue on the implications of new weapons technologies. UNIDIR will also contribute to efforts to strengthen the coherence of United Nations engagement in addressing the impact of explosive weapons in populated areas, coordination on improvised explosive devices and support to country-level efforts to address small arms and light weapons threats. Finally, the Agenda highlighted the work UNIDIR had initiated in 2016 on how gender equality and perspectives might be brought into disarmament institutions and deliberations. In its support for the Agenda, the first comprehensive cross-system effort to mainstream and integrate disarmament across the work of the United Nations will be the priority of UNIDIR and will shape its research agenda, activities and resource mobilization efforts in the coming years.

10. In February 2018, the Conference on Disarmament decided to establish subsidiary bodies to address five specific agenda items and topics of the Conference.[2] UNIDIR was then requested to provide context-setting and substantive briefings, background papers and materials, and to participate in meetings of each of the five groups between May and August 2018, in close coordination with their respective Chairs and the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The reinvigoration of the Conference represents a hopeful, if unanticipated, step forward that UNIDIR has sought to support using its existing resources, in the absence of dedicated funding for support to multilateral disarmament processes and a very limited institutional operating budget.

11. The potential for renewal in multilateral disarmament efforts in 2018 must be nurtured. Although the prospects for tangible progress in the immediate future may be constrained, it is vital that all opportunities to overcome deadlock and bring new energy to efforts to ease current international tensions and advance dialogue be pursued. To play its part in that collective effort, UNIDIR will need to find ways to become more nimble and responsive to support disarmament processes, work with diverse partners, facilitate more sustained dialogue and balance the provision of ongoing knowledge support with advancing new ideas. That in turn will have implications for UNIDIR in terms of its funding structure and operating model, which have been the subject of an independent third-party assessment undertaken at the request of the General Assembly.[3] That review, undertaken in the first quarter of 2018, will provide the basis for the Secretary-General to present a report on the issue to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

[2] See CD/2119, para. 1, available at http://undocs.org/cd/2119.

[3] See General Assembly resolution 70/69, para. 10.

II. Programme of work

A. Performance and status of implementation of activities for the period January 2017 to May 2018

1. Knowledge and advisory support

12. During the reporting period, as part of its mandate to promote informed participation by all States in disarmament efforts and to assist in ongoing intergovernmental negotiations, UNIDIR provided factual information, policy advice and support to the Member States, officeholders and individual delegations that participate in disarmament-related processes. This included, for example, support for individual Presidents of the Conference on Disarmament in 2017 and for the 2018 subsidiary bodies, as well as expert briefings to other bodies, including the 2017 Group of Government Experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems.

13. UNIDIR also served as technical consultant to a range of Groups of Government Experts established by the General Assembly, including that on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security (2016–2017) and the High-level Expert Preparatory Group on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosives (2017–2018). It was selected as a consultant for the 2018 Group of Governmental Experts on nuclear disarmament verification and the 2018 Group of Governmental Experts on the prevention of an arms race in outer space.

14. UNIDIR responded to requests for knowledge and advice from the wider United Nations system, for example by giving informal briefings to the Security Council Sanctions Committees and to the Counter-Terrorism Committee on weapons and ammunition management in West and East Africa. While UNIDIR is limited in the support it can provide given the lack of dedicated resources for knowledge and advisory services, it has sought to prioritize requests from regional organizations, such as the provision of expertise to the African Union for its meeting in June 2017 on illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons in Africa, and to the Economic Community of West African States regional meeting for national commissions on small arms and light weapons, held in January 2018.

15. Staff contributed to multilateral capacity-building workshops and activities in different parts of the world. Examples include the provision of support to the Caribbean Community Implementation Agency for Crime and Security for national points of contact on small arms; the Hiroshima Round Table of nuclear experts; and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) school in Oberammergau, Germany, on arms control policy.

16. Recognizing the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation education and training, UNIDIR hosted several fellows and interns and offered briefings to numerous visiting scholars, governmental officials and student groups. In addition, it continued its support for the annual nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation training programme of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in Hiroshima, Japan.

2. Research projects and activities

17. UNIDIR undertakes research projects in diverse areas of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control with a view to providing the international community with data and analysis that can contribute to knowledge and understanding of complex political and technical international security and disarmament issues, stimulate new ideas and approaches to advance

intergovernmental disarmament processes and enhance collaboration with academics and research networks around the world. Most of its financial resources — 82 per cent in 2017 — are earmarked by funders for specific research projects.

18. During the reporting period, UNIDIR undertook 38 projects, held 45 events and issued 40 publications. UNIDIR staff organized events or gave presentations in not only Geneva, but also, among others: Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire; Abuja; Addis Ababa; Baghdad; Bangui; Bangkok; Brussels; Doha; Doorn, the Netherlands; Geilenkirchen, Germany; Hiroshima; London; Mogadishu; Monrovia; Nagasaki, Japan; Nairobi; New York; Niamey; Oberammergau; Oslo; Ouagadougou; Phoenix, United States of America; Port of Spain; Pretoria; St. John's, Canada; San Francisco, United States; Singapore; Stockholm; Thun, Switzerland; Tokyo; Vienna; and Washington, D.C.

19. The information presented below is based on activities carried out during the reporting period within four research programmes: weapons of mass destruction; conventional weapons; emerging security issues; and security and society. Detailed project information, publications and other materials are available on the UNIDIR website (www.unidir.org). Projects completed within that period are indicated with an asterisk.

(a) Weapons of mass destruction

20. In recent years, differences over the pace of nuclear disarmament and how to move that pace forwards have dominated multilateral debates on nuclear weapons. A humanitarian focus on the risks and consequences of a nuclear conflict or an accidental detonation of nuclear weapons has drawn international attention to the importance of making progress on nuclear disarmament. The means for doing so, however, are disputed, especially among the parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The adoption in July 2017 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has changed the landscape of the nuclear disarmament discussion.

21. In response, and with a view to identifying areas of common concern and supporting potential consensus among Member States, UNIDIR has increased its research activities related to nuclear disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation. Those activities have ranged from reframing and offering new approaches to verification issues to building bridges between Member States on issues pertaining to nuclear disarmament.

(i) Verifying the absence of nuclear weapons

22. It is universally accepted that robust verification arrangements are essential for the success of nuclear disarmament. The goal of the project has been to develop a model arrangement that enables reliable verification of one of the key elements of disarmament — the removal of nuclear weapons from a State, territory or facility — undertaken as part of the weapons consolidation and subsequent elimination process.

(ii) New approaches to transparency and verification in nuclear security and disarmament

23. In this project, UNIDIR has explored new tools and approaches that can provide transparency and accountability in nuclear disarmament and nuclear security with a focus on fissile materials in the military domain, including materials still in nuclear weapons and their components. The primary goal of the project has been to develop tools that would use recent advances in verification technologies to achieve transparency without intrusiveness in dealing with materials that are sensitive in nature.

*(iii) New approaches to transparency and verification of fissile material stocks**

24. In this project, UNIDIR has developed the concept of deferred verification, using a mechanism that will allow a fissile material treaty to include declarations of existing fissile material stocks covering all categories of materials, including materials in nuclear weapons. The benefit of the approach is that, while making the declarations legally binding and verifiable, it will not require access to classified information related to nuclear weapons or weapon materials.

(iv) Nuclear disarmament, deterrence and the Non-Proliferation Treaty: bridge-building (phases I and II*)*

25. In the first phase of this project, UNIDIR examined ways in which nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States might cooperatively move forward towards a world without nuclear weapons. In phase II, UNIDIR produced further research on ways to build bridges with a view to resuming dialogue on nuclear disarmament. The findings were discussed at a side-event of the Non-Proliferation Treaty preparatory meeting, held in Vienna in May 2017, and on the margins of the Non-Proliferation Treaty preparatory meeting, held in Geneva in 2018.

*(v) Nuts and bolts of the ban**

26. In 2017, negotiations commenced within the United Nations on a treaty to prohibit nuclear weapons, leading towards their total elimination. The project examined substantive issues within the negotiations with a view to identifying potential solution pathways, addressing demand from a wide range of small and medium-sized Member States involved in the process.

*(vi) Nuclear weapons in Europe: stepping stones for restrictions and reductions**

27. While it is difficult to imagine a scenario in which "non-strategic" or "tactical" nuclear weapons would be deliberately used in a conflict in Europe, the presence of such weapons poses potential risks of miscalculation, inadvertent escalation or accidental use at a time of crisis. The project involved developing a "zero deployed non-strategic weapons" proposal to ensure that all such weapons would remain non-deployed during times of peace, codifying current practices into a legally binding, verifiable arrangement. It also involved a workshop to explore that proposal with Member States.

*(vii) Understanding nuclear weapon risks**

28. This project aimed to deepen the understanding in policy of the nuclear risk through focused research and engagement, both to detail the risk "picture" and to communicate the findings to the disarmament community. A risk focus might be one in which a wide range of actors — including nuclear-armed States and non-nuclear-armed States — find common ground on nuclear weapons-related issues. The project included commissioned papers and meetings devoted to the theme organized in collaboration with relevant institutions. The project report was presented in Geneva in April 2017.

(b) Conventional weapons

29. The illicit proliferation, excessive accumulation and misuse of conventional arms and ammunition pose a persistent problem for peace and security. In many cases, diversion is a consequence of inadequately controlled transfers, unauthorized retransfer or leakages and thefts from poorly secured stockpiles. In addition, fragile

or conflict-affected States are often disproportionately burdened by the illicit flow and availability of arms and ammunition.

30. In response to those challenges, UNIDIR aims to shape policy discussions, build capacity and identify solutions on the ground and at the multilateral level. Programme work addresses four themes: (a) managing weapons and ammunition in fragile and conflict-affected settings; (b) tackling diversion in global arms transfers; (c) addressing explosive threats; and (d) supporting the implementation of global instruments and guidelines.

(i) Assessing the role of arms control in managing conflict (phases I and II)*

31. Phase I of the project comprised three inter-connected components: a comprehensive study establishing baselines of national stakeholders and processes to govern arms and ammunition in conformity with international and regional norms and standards; a study focusing on the applicability of conventional arms control in Security Council arms embargoes; and a series of three expert meetings to identify concrete options for policymakers and practitioners to effectively operationalize weapons and ammunition management processes in line with existing standards and guidelines.

32. In phase II, UNIDIR has established a baseline of the institutional capacity of select West African States to govern weapons and ammunition in line with relevant standards and guidelines. UNIDIR will produce a guidance document that supports States, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to operationalize ammunition management in high-risk, low-capacity environments. Finally, UNIDIR will conduct stakeholder consultations to identify options and opportunities to increase understanding on the applicability of conventional arms control in supporting the implementation and monitoring of sanctions regimes.

(ii) Weapons and ammunition management in Somalia (phases II and III)*

33. Since the project began in 2014, UNIDIR has held a series of national consultative meetings in Mogadishu to support the Federal Government of Somalia in establishing national policies for the import, initial storage, marking recordkeeping and distribution of arms in line with relevant Security Council resolution obligations. The meetings have played a crucial role in supporting the Government and its international partners.

34. Building on the outcomes of the first two phases of the project, the objective of phase III is to support the Federal Government and United Nations partners in their efforts to establish accountable and transparent weapons and ammunition management policies and plans and to help monitor and assess — through the identification of benchmarks — progress in such management for the period 2017–2020.

(iii) Preventing terrorists from acquiring weapons: options to effectively implement Security Council resolution 2370 (2017)

35. In its resolution 2370 (2017), the Security Council called upon all States to eliminate the supply of weapons to those involved in terrorist acts. The aims of the project is to increase understanding among States and relevant stakeholders of the threats and risks relevant to the resolution and to identify options for its effective implementation. In October 2018, UNIDIR will bring together actors from various sectors to conduct stakeholder mapping, identify potential gaps and opportunities within and beyond existing frameworks and initiatives and explore concrete ways to support the operationalization of the resolution.

(iv) Tackling diversion (phases II and III)*

36. Phase II had a regional focus and principally involved States in the global South that were not part of export control regimes, the European Union or the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The key objectives of the project were to gain a deeper understanding of potential export control procedures, approaches and practices, to increase awareness and dialogue between stakeholders and to understand the practical steps States could take to further facilitate a regional and global dialogue to strengthen control systems for end uses and end users. The project contributed to informing the discussions on preventing diversion in arms transfers under the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects and the Arms Trade Treaty.

37. Phase III focuses on the roles and responsibilities of parties where non-governmental entities are part of the transfer chain. In July 2018, UNIDIR was to hold an informal consultative meeting with the private sector to consider the roles and responsibilities of all parties to prevent diversion. The findings of the project will help to further develop practical solutions to strengthen the control of end uses and end users in tackling diversion in conventional arms transfers.

*(v) Examining the roles, responsibilities and contributions of private-sector industry actors in stemming the flow of improvised explosive devices and related materials**

38. Given the unique challenges posed by improvised explosive devices, in particular their non-traditional means of production, engaging private-sector stakeholders is an essential component of a comprehensive, multilateral response. In 2017, UNIDIR convened States and private-sector actors to discuss the private sector's roles and responsibilities in stemming the flow of such devices and related materials. Participants considered regulatory frameworks, physical security considerations, information-sharing processes, awareness-raising and sensitization activities and good practices. A meeting report was disseminated widely in 2017.

(vi) Informing the basis for convening a group of governmental experts in 2020 on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus

39. This project supports the substantive preparations for convening a group of governmental experts in 2020 on problems arising from the accumulation of conventional ammunition stockpiles in surplus.[4] In 2018, UNIDIR will organize a thematic seminar in Geneva, bringing together policymakers and practitioners from States, international and regional organizations, expert NGOs and the private sector. UNIDIR will produce a report reflecting the key findings.

(vii) International Tracing Instrument and the way forward: examining possible options to support the operationalization of the Instrument

40. This project aims to identify concrete options to support the operationalization of the International Tracing Instrument. In February 2018, UNIDIR convened an informal expert meeting in Geneva to explore options and approaches to strengthen the operational framework of the Instrument, including the identification of measures to enable effective tracing operations. The meeting included experts from States, specialized organizations and NGOs. The findings will be disseminated in June 2018 in a report and at an event at the Third United Nations Conference to Review Progress

[4] See General Assembly resolution 72/55, para. 16.

Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

*(viii) Exploring synergies in reporting under multilateral conventional arms treaties and instruments**

41. This project identified options to facilitate and strengthen reporting by States in the area of conventional arms. It included mapping the reporting obligations and commitments for select multilateral treaties and instruments and highlighted the areas of convergence. It also identified challenges and opportunities for strengthening reporting by States. In December 2017, UNIDIR, in cooperation with the Stimson Center, convened an informal expert meeting on the topic in order to inform a practical handbook to facilitate State reporting. The key findings from the project were presented in March 2018 on the margins of the preparatory committee meeting of the Third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

*(ix) Arms transfer dialogue**

42. This project, implemented in partnership with the Small Arms Survey, established a Geneva-based forum to explore the options and approaches for supporting multilateral processes on conventional arms control. It also provided a venue for discussing synergies between international instruments regulating arms transfers and addressing the illicit arms trade. After each event, a meeting summary was produced (see www.armstransfersdialogue.org).

(x) International small arms and ammunition guidance platform (phase II)*

43. In phase II of this project, a software tool was developed to assist practitioners in conducting field-level storage assessments. A series of informal consultative meetings were held on designing a national framework for managing the full life cycle of arms and ammunition in conflict-affected settings, and a study was initiated to examine the possible approaches to strengthening arms and ammunition management in conflicted-affected settings. A series of national assessment workshops were also organized to support the efforts of States to review and/or establish baselines on the implementation of small arms control frameworks in line with international guidelines.

(c) Emerging security issues

44. Advances in science and technology have brought about new weapons, means and methods of warfare, raising challenges that cut across traditional legal, normative, operational and national boundaries. Through its emerging security issues programme, UNIDIR provides expertise and support to advance nascent and ongoing policy processes in several areas.

45. The activities of UNIDIR concerning emerging security issues focus on two objectives: to support the creation or strengthening of normative frameworks on science and technology issues in the absence of agreement on negotiated or regulatory responses; and to build the capacity of States to participate in informed policy discussions by framing complex, technical or specialized issues in an accessible way. The emerging security issues portfolio currently addresses three substantive areas: (a) artificial intelligence and the weaponization of increasingly autonomous technologies; (b) cyberstability; and (c) security in outer space.

(ii) *Artificial intelligence and the weaponization of increasingly autonomous technologies*

46. Building on its work since 2013, the activities of UNIDIR in 2017 focused on supporting the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and the Group of Government Experts on lethal autonomous weapon systems. First, it developed a primer to examine the concerns, characteristics and definitions. Second, it issued a report on the topic of cybervulnerabilities in increasingly autonomous weapon systems. Third, it developed a "tech-gaming" scenario-based exercise for States to consider how small technological developments could affect the legality, acceptability and utility of increasingly autonomous systems.

47. Activities in 2018 have had two objectives: first, to encourage greater participation by scientists and technologists in international discussions on autonomous weapon systems through focused outreach to those communities by way of presentations, articles and small, cross-disciplinary meetings; and second, to support discussions on the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and beyond through primers for policymakers on themes such as artificial intelligence, machine learning in adversarial environments, and algorithmic bias.

(iii) *Second international cybersecurity issues expert workshop series*

48. Building on the success of the 2016 series, in 2017 UNIDIR and the Center for Strategic and International Studies launched a second series with a focus on regional concerns. The expert workshops bring together participants from Governments, the private sector, NGOs and the academic community to promote common understandings on key issues; and to focus on concrete ways to operationalize the recommendations contained in the 2010, 2013 and 2015 reports of the Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security.[5] The first workshop was held in Singapore in September 2017 and a second workshop was held in February 2018 at the headquarters of the Organization of American States. The final workshop will be held in the fourth quarter of 2018, and will focus on building synergies between regional organizations.

(iii) *Cyberstability conference series*

49. This annual conference provides a forum for representatives of Governments, international and regional organizations as well as civil society to discuss issues pertaining to the international security dimension of information and communications technology (ICT). The 2017 conference, entitled "ICT in the context of international peace and security: current conditions and future approaches" was held on 11 October in New York and provided an opportunity to discuss possible ways forward following the inability of the Group of Governmental Experts to reach a consensus in their 2017 meeting. The next conference will be held in Geneva in September 2018 and will focus on the roles and responsibilities of States, regional organizations and the private sector in creating an open, secure, stable, accessible and peaceful ICT environment.

(iv) *Updated, interactive digital edition of the 2013 cyberindex*

50. The objectives of this project are to contribute to improving the capacity of policy actors working in the cyber domain through the development of a digital resource that provides policymakers with timely, policy-relevant information. The tool will be completed by the end of 2018.

[5] A/65/201, A/68/98 and A/70/174.

(v) Geneva dialogue on responsible State behaviour in cyberspace

51. This project, established by the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in April 2018, aims to map the roles and responsibilities of States, private companies and other key actors in contributing to greater security and stability in cyberspace, identify good practices and possible gaps in existing efforts, and put forward recommendations for overcoming such gaps. UNIDIR leads the project pillar on the responsible behaviour of States.

(vi) Space dossier

52. In 2017, UNIDIR launched a new series of short reports on outer space security. Its "space dossier" contains specific ideas for the progressive development of space security norms. The first report, on strategic stability in outer space, was published in 2017 and a second, on the development of anti-satellite technology testing norms, was issued in May 2018. Two further reports will be produced in 2018.

(vii) Space security conference series

53. This is an annual event where UNIDIR seeks to identify concrete areas on which the international community can move forward with discussions on space arms control and de-escalation. The 2017 Conference was held in April 2017 on the theme "The Outer Space Treaty's 50th Anniversary: Reviewing the Regime". The 2018 Conference, entitled "Space Security: The Next Chapter", was held on 7 and 8 May 2018. It considered the existing framework for space governance to examine which aspects were still relevant to the emerging order in outer space, and which elements could be updated.

(d) Security and society

54. UNIDIR focuses on cross-cutting, multidisciplinary approaches to security issues that have wider societal ramifications in such areas as health, development, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and human rights. A crucial component of that research programme is building networks of stakeholders beyond the traditional security and arms control community.

Increasing transparency, oversight and accountability of unmanned aerial vehicles (phases I and II)*

55. In 2016, UNIDIR started work to facilitate multilateral dialogue on armed unmanned aerial vehicles with the aim of increasing transparency, oversight and accountability of those systems. The resulting study suggested a variety of useful policy responses were realistically available to the international community, even in the current political landscape. The objective of the second phase of the project is to engage States in structured dialogue based on the study, in order to build momentum and support for multilateral responses that are inclusive and weigh the variety of interests and concerns about armed unmanned aerial vehicles. As part of the project, there will be three topical research briefs, and workshops and an event will be held in New York in October 2018.

3. Resources and expenditure for 2017 and 2018

56. UNIDIR continues to be funded through a mixture of voluntary contributions and a subvention from the United Nations regular budget towards meeting the costs

of the Director and staff.* Revenue in 2017 was $3,180,000, and total expenditure was $2,310,000 (see annex I, table 1), with a total of 21 donors (see annex I, table 2).

57. Projected revenue and expenses for 2018 are shown in annex II, while actual revenue and expenses for the first quarter of 2018 are shown in annex I, table 1. As noted in paragraph 17 above, most voluntary contributions are earmarked for specific projects. Projects and activities receive funding on a rolling basis throughout the year. Thus, budgetary projections are of an indicative nature.

58. The subvention currently covers the cost of the Director and, in 2017, constituted 9 per cent of the total revenue for UNIDIR. In the past, the Secretary-General, the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR and the General Assembly have made many recommendations about the need to increase the subvention to ensure the continued functioning and independence of UNIDIR. In 2015, Member States expressed concern over the unsustainable financing situation of the institutional operations budget and, as noted previously, requested the Secretary-General to present a report on the issue to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, on the basis of an independent third-party assessment of a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for UNIDIR.

B. Proposed programme of work and financial plan for 2019

59. Recent advances, as well as the abovementioned Agenda for Disarmament, offer the potential for renewal both of and within multilateral disarmament processes. Through its 2019 programme of work, UNIDIR will support the roll-out and implementation of the Agenda, in particular the areas where it has been specifically tasked to contribute knowledge and ideas, provide advice to specific initiatives and processes and convene dialogue. UNIDIR will seek to broaden the conversation around why disarmament matters in times of tension to prevent crises, how it supports and contributes to the 2030 Agenda and how it must be led by more diverse stakeholders, including through the participation of young people and the promotion of gender parity. At the same time, it will also continue to support intergovernmental processes in Geneva and, as appropriate, New York, and provide a wide range of knowledge and advisory services on request and on ad hoc bases.

60. The efforts of UNIDIR to mobilize its resources will be oriented accordingly. This will require renewed attention on funding for institutional activities, such as dialogue facilitation, support to bodies of the Conference on Disarmament and outreach outside of Geneva and New York. This will be a significant challenge for UNIDIR, which relies, to date, on short-term, earmarked, project-specific funds. Given that UNIDIR projects do not necessarily follow the calendar year, a number of them will continue into 2019 while the rest of the 2019 programme of work will depend on successful resource mobilization.

61. The financial expenditure to support the 2019 programme of work is conservatively projected at $2,771,000, as shown in annex III. The projected institutional operations budget for 2019 is contained in annex IV. Projected revenue and expenses are based on an assessment of the desired accomplishments of UNIDIR for the year and historical trends in funding.

* According to UNIDIR's Statute (Art VII) the actual amount of the subvention "may be less than, but shall not exceed, an amount equivalent to one half of the assured income of the Institute from voluntary sources".

III. Communications and outreach

62. Communications and outreach are essential to enable UNIDIR to fulfil its mandate, transmit its research and findings to a diverse global community and contribute meaningfully to disarmament and international security processes at the international, regional and national levels. Over the past two years, encouraged by its Board of Trustees, UNIDIR has sought to increase its communication efforts via a monthly update email, a greater social media presence and experimentation with new tools, such as video interviews with experts.

63. Those efforts, however, are far from sufficient. UNIDIR has not had a dedicated communications capacity since the late 1990s, and successive cost-cutting exercises have further reduced its visibility and outreach efforts. The recent third-party assessment noted above highlighted the need for increased communications and visibility efforts to disseminate findings, demonstrate impact and underpin a resource mobilization strategy.

64. The stakeholders interviewed as part of that assessment confirmed that the lack of visibility of UNIDIR outside Geneva was a significant obstacle to increasing its impact. In response, the Director has committed to increasing its communication capacity immediately (see sect. IV below) and to prioritize engagement and outreach, particularly outside countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, in order to build networks with a broader set of stakeholders, raise the profile and visibility of the research of UNIDIR and encourage more diversity in its activities.

IV. Staffing and operating model

65. At the end of 2017, the staff of UNIDIR comprised the Director, the Deputy Director, the Chief of Research, the Budget and Finance Officer and a team assistant. Staff are responsible for the following: strategic planning; resource mobilization; project development, oversight and evaluation; representational functions; financial and donor reporting; communications; and administrative and logistical functions.

66. UNIDIR engages specific expertise for each specific project, as either resident or non-resident researchers. In addition, the Director, the Deputy Director and the Chief of Research carry substantive research portfolios. Researchers are recruited according to United Nations consultancy arrangements[7] and therefore do not have authorization to supervise staff or undertake administrative tasks requiring access to Umoja.

67. As noted above, UNIDIR recognizes that communications and outreach requires specialized, dedicated expertise and therefore plans to recruit a public information officer at the P-4 level who will report to the Director to help build its online and social media presence and to coordinate public information campaigns and activities. Moreover, in order to ensure compliance with funding agreements and support the administrative requirements of research staff as its activity portfolio grows, UNIDIR also plans to recruit an associate administrative officer at the P-2 level.

V. Conclusion

68. Developments over the course of the reporting period offer some potential for new momentum in multilateral disarmament. Increased attention by policymakers and

[7] ST/AI/2013/4

expert communities, including the private sector on the implications of new technologies, as well as vibrant civil society engagement on issues of conventional arms and weapons of mass destruction have opened new opportunities for dialogue and practical action. The Agenda on Disarmament articulates the diversity of today's disarmament challenges, the risks of inaction and the urgency for a reinvigorated multilateral dialogue and action.

69. In that context, a stable, responsive and effective UNIDIR is more necessary than ever. Its mandate and unique status within the United Nations disarmament machinery give it the potential to contribute knowledge and ideas, facilitate dialogue and, where requested, provide policy advice that can contribute to building momentum and supporting the participation of all Member States on disarmament. UNIDIR, as the present report illustrates, has demonstrated its ability to provide specialized expertise and offer practical solutions in a broad range of disarmament issues. If UNIDIR is to contribute fully to taking forward the Agenda on Disarmament and support tangible progress towards a safer and more sustainable world, it will need the capacity and agility to respond to new initiatives and developments, draw on diverse subject and geographical expertise and facilitate dialogue and engagement with more — and more diverse — stakeholders on critical disarmament issues.

70. Against that backdrop, the request of the General Assembly for the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventy-third session on a sustainable and stable funding structure and operating model for UNIDIR offers a significant opportunity for Member States to consider how such capability might be realized. It is a moment for reflection but also for action to overcome long-standing obstacles, generate ideas and dialogue and make tangible progress in multilateral disarmament. UNIDIR has a modest but unique contribution to make to that ambitious agenda: the establishment of a stable and sustainable basis for it do so could be an important step towards its realization.

Annex I

Table 1
Actual revenue and expenses for 2017 and first quarter of 2018[a]

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Description	*2017*	*First quarter 2018*
Revenue		
Voluntary contributions	2 765	419
Investment revenue	58	18
Other transfers and allocations	333	421
Other revenue	24[b]	1
Total revenue	**3 180**	**859**
Expenses		
Direct expenditure		
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 144[c]	301[d]
Non-employee compensation and allowances	566[e]	148[f]
Grants and other transfers	80	0
Supplies and consumables	2	0
Travel	180	46
Other operating expenses	225	51
Programme support and prorated expenses	106	33
Other expenses	7	1
Total expenses	**2 310**	**580**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year[g]	**870**	**279**

[a] Figures from UNIDIR statement of financial performance for the year 2017. The statement was prepared in accordance with IPSAS; contributions are accounted for in the year when the pledge is signed, for present as well as for future years. For further information on IPSAS, as well as the basis for the preparation of UNIDIR financial statements, please see A/71/162, annex I, and A/72/154, annex I.

[b] Includes net foreign exchange gain.

[c] Institutional staff costs in 2017 amount to $1,010,781.

[d] Institutional staff costs for the first quarter of 2018 amount to $272,650.

[e] $74,803 corresponds to travels of consultants.

[f] $15,077 corresponds to travels of consultants.

[g] These funds are earmarked as per funding agreements with donors. The number at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received and the actual implementation periods of projects, which do not always run on a calendar year.

Table 2
Details of voluntary contributions for 2017[a]

(United States dollars)

Description	*Amount*
A. Voluntary contributions	
China	20 000
Cyprus	11 900
Estonia	11 614

Description	*Amount*
Finland	339 047
France	160 000
Germany	1 151 000
India	15 000
Ireland	114 063
Kazakhstan	10 000
Luxembourg	11 792
Netherlands	318 000
Pakistan	5 000
Philippines	5 000
Russian Federation	100 000
Sweden	45 814
Switzerland	210 402
Turkey	2 000
Hiroshima Prefecture	28 325
Carnegie Corporation of New York	245 000
Small Arms Survey	10 000
The Simons Foundation Canada	20 000
Refund to donors[b]	(68 478)
Subtotal, A	**2 765 479**
B. Other transfers and allocations	
Subvention from the United Nations regular budget	297 560
Office for Disarmament Affairs[c]	63 000
United Nations Trust Facility Supporting Cooperation on Arms Regulation	(27 638)
Subtotal, B	**332 862**
Total	**3 098 341**

[a] Figures from UNIDIR statement of financial performance for the year 2017. The statement was prepared in accordance with IPSAS, contributions are accounted for in the year when the pledge is signed, for present as well as for future years.

[b] In accordance with financing agreements, refunds are issued to donors when specific project activities are modified and result in actual expenditures being lower than the amount foreseen in the initial activity budget agreed upon by the funder.

[c] Earmarked funding for advisory services to support Groups of Governmental Experts.

Annex II

Projected revenue and expenses for 2018[a]

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Description	*2018*
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions	3 016
Investment income	16
Other transfers and allocations	434
Other revenue	24
Total revenue	**3 490**
Expenses	
Direct expenditure	
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 574
Non-employee compensation and allowances	337
Grants and other transfers	40
Supplies and consumables	2
Travel	147
Other operating expenses	201
Programme support and prorated expenses	106
Other expenses	15
Total expenses	**2 422**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year[b]	**1 068**

[a] Projections for 2018 were calculated as an average of the years 2014, 2015 and 2017, plus 1 per cent (see A/72/154).

[b] Funds earmarked as per funding agreements with donors. The number at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received and the actual implementation periods of projects, which do not always run on a calendar year.

Annex III

Projected revenue and expenses for 2019[a]

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Description	*2019*
Revenue	
Voluntary contributions	2 960
Investment income	27
Other transfers and allocations	409
Other revenue	25
Total revenue	**3 421**
Expenses	
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	1 815
Non-employee compensation and allowances	396
Grants and other transfers	50
Supplies and consumables	2
Travel	156
Other operating expenses	207
Programme support and prorated expenses	132
Other expenses	13
Total expenses	**2 771**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year[b]	**650**

[a] Projections for 2019 were calculated as an average of the years 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018, plus 1 per cent, except for the following categories: employee salaries, allowances and benefits, which shows standard salary costs for United Nations contract holders; and programme support and prorated expenses.

[b] Funds earmarked as per funding agreements with donors. The number at year-end is determined by the date at which funds are received and the actual implementation periods of projects, which do not always run on a calendar year.

Annex IV

Institutional operations budget for 2019

(Thousands of United States dollars)

Description	*Amount*
Institutional staff[a]	
D-2 (Director)	321.4
P-5 (Deputy to the Director)	265.6
P-5 (Chief of Research)	265.6
P-4 (Finance and Budget Officer)	225.8
P-4 (Public Information Officer)	225.8
P-2 (Associate Administrative Officer)	153.1
1 GS (OL) (Team/Administrative Assistant)	171.7
Subtotal, institutional staff	**1 629.0**
Travel	30.0
Communications and outreach	70.0
Information and Communications Technology Service	20.0
Telecommunications	10.0
Miscellaneous operating costs	15.0
Subtotal, institutional operating costs	**145.0**
Subtotal	**1 774.0**
Programme support costs	88.7
Total	**1 862.7**

Abbreviation: GS (OL), General Service (Other level).

[a] Based on budget information system standard salary costs for the year 2019, applicable to Geneva (version 6). The institutional team is presented here as comprising seven staff responsible for: support and supervision of research-related activities; provision of support and advisory services to various stakeholders; and delivery of institutional tasks. Institutional tasks are independent of the amount of research-related work and include, among others, tasks necessary: to conceptualize and oversee the research agenda and resource mobilization strategy; to communicate research findings; to represent UNIDIR; to establish and maintain research networks; to report to the UNIDIR Board of Trustees; and to comply with other United Nations requirements. These institutional functions are identified in the independent third-party assessment of UNIDIR.